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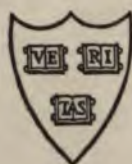


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**HINTS TO YOUNG PEOPLE**  
ON  
**THE DUTIES**  
OF  
**CIVIL LIFE.**



BY JAMES MOTT

NO. 23.

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# HINTS

TO

## YOUNG PEOPLE.

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YOU are now at that season of life when your minds are susceptible of improvement. Your faculties are expanding; and exercise will increase their powers. Your understanding is now inquisitive, and eager for information. Let it be your study to direct it to the contemplation of proper objects, and to the acquisition of useful knowledge. If it be left uncultivated, you may conceive false notions of things; and you will probably imbibe such prejudices, as may give a wrong bias to your conduct through life, and in a great measure deprive you of the satisfaction and benefit that may be derived from civil society.

Now is indeed the seed time of life; and *according to what you sow, you shall reap*. The direction which you now give to your desires and passions, will be likely to continue. Beware, then, at your first setting out in life, of those seducing appearances of pleasure that surround you. It often happens, that, by a continued series of loose, though apparently trivial gratifications, the heart is thoroughly corrupted. Guard, therefore, against accounting any thing small or trivial, which is in hazard of introducing disorder into your hearts. Set out with the intention, that usefulness and active goodness shall direct your pursuits: thus will each in his place, contribute to the general welfare, and reap the benefit of his own improvement.



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particular weakness or infirmity, genuine civility will not allow you to exercise your wit by inventing occasions which may expose or betray it; but will lead you to give as favourable a turn as you can to the weakness of such.

To treat the frailties of our fellow-creatures with tenderness, to correct their errors with kindness, to view even their vices with pity, and to induce, by every friendly attention, a mutual good will, are not only important moral duties, but means of increasing the sum of earthly happiness.

Polite or well-behaved people discover a modesty without bashfulness, a candour without bluntness, a freedom without assurance. They do not rudely contradict each other. They are attentive to what is said, and reply with mildness and condescension. They neither intermeddle unnecessarily with the affairs, nor pry into the secrets, of others. Thus, their conduct being easy, agreeable, and consistent with sincerity, they command respect. In short, true civility or politeness, is that kind of behaviour which unites firmness with gentleness of manners, and which springs from a disposition to please, but never at the expense of integrity.

But there is a description of people who style themselves *plain dealers*; they speak what they think, with a rough bluntness, and uncontrolled freedom, without respect to time or place. They openly reprove the faults of others, and throw out their satire indiscriminately. Such persons, however unexceptionable their morals, and however true their remarks, are, notwithstanding, unpleasant companions.

In conversation, mark well what others say or do. Accurate observation, and reflection upon men and things, give wisdom. Those are the great books of learning; too seldom read. Be always on your watch, but particularly in company. Interrupt none. Be swift to hear, slow to speak. This gives time to understand, and ripens an an-

swer. Aim not to use fine words, but rather to convey good sense; and chiefly to be pertinent and plain. The truest eloquence is the plainest; and the most concise style is generally the best. Never exchange simplicity of manners, speech, or behaviour, for that which is the effect of false taste, or servile imitation. Banish art and affectation; for you will not make yourselves agreeable by either. Strict sincerity, with unassuming manners, will gain you the esteem and confidence of your acquaintance.

Do good when you can—Speak evil of none—these are important lessons; the latter should be so indelibly imprinted on your mind, as to keep you on your guard, in all company, and on all occasions; so that you may avoid saying any thing of an absent person that will tend to lessen his reputation. For, although evil-speaking too frequently forms a considerable part of common conversation, this does not lessen its criminality, nor palliate the injury done to the reputation of our neighbour. Avoid, therefore, and discourage every kind of detraction. Listen not to slander. Never judge with rigour, nor condemn any person unheard. Remember, there are things resembling truth, that are not true. In private judgment we should imitate the equity of public decisions. Judges never decide without examining the grounds of accusation, and hearing the defence of the accused. It would indeed be great injustice, if they did so.

And let me impress it upon you, that a sense of justice should be the principle on which you should act. In your earliest intercourse with the world, and even in your youthful amusements, permit no unfairness of any kind. Despise that gain which cannot be obtained without mean arts. Stoop to no dissimulation; for it will sink you into contempt. Engrave on your minds this sacred rule; "all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

And as justice is due to man, so is tenderness to the



brute creation ; since both originate from the same principle. To torment any living creature, even the least insect, is an act of inhumanity. They are alike subject to pain with ourselves. The All-wise Creator, whose mercies are over all his works, did not give us dominion over the beasts of the field, that we should exercise it with cruelty. Yet how often do we see them treated with the most unfeeling barbarity ! particularly that useful animal, the horse ; how he is lashed and driven, as if he were void of sensation, or of a capability of suffering by extreme fatigue ! And the faithful dog, how frequently is he kicked about and abused.

Endeavour not only to have your temper so governed by reason, as to avoid abuse to brutes, but to possess such coolness of mind, and serenity of countenance, as to be able to hear disagreeable things from your fellow-men without anger, and agreeable ones without sudden bursts of joy. If from any cause you feel a hasty rise of passion, resolve not to utter a word while that emotion continues. Determine to keep your countenance as unmoved, and as unembarrassed as possible. People are sometimes led into great inconsistencies by giving way to anger. By silence, or a gentle and meek answer, the offending person will sooner be convinced of his error, than by a return of angry expressions. Passionate persons often make others unhappy, and themselves miserable. Indeed people, when angry, are not properly themselves. Silence, therefore, is the best answer to passion ; and will frequently conquer what resistance would inflame.

Never give the least place to feelings of hatred and vengeance. Revenge is ignoble. If any one has injured you, seek satisfaction in manifesting a moderation greater than the malice of your adversary. By forgiving his offence, you will in some measure disarm your enemy, and perhaps convert his enmity into friendship. Indeed, the Christian

has but one means of obtaining satisfaction, that of doing good to those who injure him. This is the most delicate, the most effectual, and the only allowable retaliation. He that pardons, feels a satisfaction as much above what vengeance affords, as pleasure exceeds pain.

And be assured, that the greatest errors, or the most erroneous principles, which it is possible for men to embrace, will never warrant in us the exercise or indulgence of a malevolent disposition towards them. From every view of perfection, the idea of ill will is totally excluded. And every degree of kindness, or a disposition to do good, becomes proportionably a source of happiness to the benevolent mind. To cultivate feelings of benevolence and love towards our fellow-creatures of every description, is a Christian duty. And were the spirit of true Christian charity, to become, as it ought to be, the distinguishing characteristic of professing Christians, it would banish from among them the despicable principles of bigotry and superstition, which have caused such bickerings and animosities, and which have so debased the character of the professed followers of Christ.

Be faithful to your promises: but, that your word may obtain entire confidence, be careful how and what you promise. Observe truth even in trifling things. To disregard it, is wicked as well as contemptible.

Be humble without being bashful. Bashfulness is sometimes a secret pride. The medium between improper bashfulness and disgusting forwardness, marks the well-bred man. He feels himself firm and easy in company; is modest, without being bashful, and steady, without being impudent. He is not disposed to engross the conversation, but to give others an opportunity of being equally free and unrestrained. When he converses with strangers, he does not incautiously condemn their customs and habits, by arrogantly holding up those of his own native place as much

preferable. Such a man converses with his superiors, with ease and respect; with his inferiors, without insolence; and with his equals, with that becoming freedom and cheerfulness, which are so grateful and pleasing in conversation.

The vain man is so full of himself, that, at every turn, it is *I* who does this or that. Tell him any thing—he has known it long ago: he either outruns information, or else proudly rejects it. Whereas, the greatest understandings are not only the most ready to learn, but generally the least arrogant.

Self-conceit, presumption, and obstinacy, tend greatly to lessen their possessors in the view of sensible persons: and, in youth, to blast the prospects of future improvement and usefulness.—“Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit; there is more hope of a fool than of him.”

In relating what has happened, omit every circumstance that is not material. Neither indulge in digressions, which may render useful communications tiresome, nor relate marvellous things, that may require proofs to be believed.

Avoid whispering in company: it bespeaks ill-breeding; and is in some degree a fraud, conversation being a joint and common stock.

Mimicry is the common and favourite amusement of low minds: practise it not yourselves, nor applaud it in others.

As I am not only pointing out traits of conduct that are offensive and blameable, but such as are merely unpleasant, I will mention the too prevalent habit of loud laughing; which, to say the best of it, is a disagreeable one. It is generally excited by low jests, or silly devices, which people of reputation and good sense, should show themselves above. Sensible conversation gives a cheerfulness to the countenance, but seldom provokes loud laughter. Some people accustom themselves to laugh when speaking. These habits, though not criminal, are unpleasant, and ought to be avoided.

When you are in company, try to bring the conversation



to some useful subject. History, literature, and the customs of particular countries, surely afford better and safer topics than dress, personal character, or such stories as afford no valuable information.

Be cautious of entertaining company with your own personal concerns, or private affairs: though they are interesting to yourselves, they are generally tedious to others.

Never say a word that can be construed into a desire for applause. Do not imagine that any thing you can say respecting yourselves, will either varnish your defects, or add lustre to your perfections. Indeed, discreet, well-educated persons rarely find opportunity to speak much of themselves: they are better employed. Those who speak little of themselves, but who set other people's merit in its true light, make a favourable impression upon the minds of their hearers, and acquire their love and esteem. They who are less anxious to obtain, than to merit the approbation of others, generally do both.

Never maintain an argument with heat and clamour, though you are confident of being in the right; but give your opinion coolly and modestly, that being the best way to convince. If you cannot do that, try to change the conversation in a gentle, easy way: for truth often suffers more from the heat of its defenders, than from the arguments of its opposers. If you would convince others, stand open to conviction yourselves; and if you would please others, endeavour to be easily pleased. To acknowledge a mistake when convinced of it, indicates an ingenuous mind. But obstinately to adhere to our sentiments when we are convinced of their error, bespeaks stubbornness, pride, and self-importance.

The high opinion people entertain of themselves, leads them to be inattentive to what others say; and to assert their own opinions, and supposed rights, with so much haughtiness, and contempt for those of others. A daring confidence is disgusting; while that becoming modesty

which generally accompanies true merit, engages the minds of people in our favour. Consider how disagreeable an impression the inattentive behaviour, and the imperious manner of a stranger make upon you, at your first interview. That which, in others, pleases or displeases you, will in you generally please or displease them.

To escape the accusation of being desirous to be thought learned, or of passing for scholars, abstain from any display of your learning, how great soever it may be. Seek not to appear wiser or more learned, than the company you are in. And whatever you converse about, let it be in an easy, natural, and unaffected manner. The manner of doing things, is sometimes more important than the things themselves. If you have occasion to contradict any body, or to correct his mistake, avoid bluntly saying, "That is not so," "I know better;" but rather express a belief that it is a mistake, or misinformation: or ask the question, Is it not thus, or so? For though you may know a thing better than other people, yet it is displeasing to tell them so, directly, without something to soften the expression. And may you who have superior learning, or other useful qualifications, or who possess riches or power, bear in mind, that these can only render their possessor happy in proportion as he employs them to increase the happiness of others. They are instruments in his hands: the wants and helplessness of mankind are the objects to which they are to be applied. Of their use an account is to be rendered. To what end they were designed, how they have been used, and what reckoning awaits them, are subjects for solemn reflection.

A taste for useful employments and literary instruction, tends to solidity of judgment. Those who can cheerfully relieve the wearisomeness of domestic concerns by a well-chosen book, will escape from many of the follies and indiscretions, to which those are liable, whose resource is dissipated or gossiping company; or the chit-chat of visit-

ing acquaintance. The lovers of industry and of books, will generally visit others, or be visited themselves, from affection and esteem: and their object will be improvement, as well as pleasure. Their home will be secured from dulness, by a mind invigorated by useful information. By their reading of books judiciously chosen, the understanding is enlarged; useful precepts and examples are learned; a knowledge of the customs, manners, government, and laws, of different nations, is obtained; and reflection and meditation are promoted. And, though I shall not attempt to point out a course of reading, yet suffer me to urge you to let the Holy Scriptures have the first place. Read them frequently, and with minds desirous of being benefited: then you will find them both delightful and instructive. The Old Testament should be read for history, chiefly; the Psalms, for meditation and devotion; but the New Testament, for doctrine, faith, and practice. And here, dear young people, permit me to entreat you, as you value your best interest, not to spend your precious time in reading novels, plays, tales of wonder, and such other books, as your best feelings, if attended to, will tell you are calculated to corrupt your minds, by leading them into vanity, and unprofitable pursuits, if not into erroneous principles. They often fill the minds of those who indulge in reading them, with visionary notions; and hence the conversation of such is frivolous and trifling, and they are rendered unfit for the useful intercourse of society.

Although history affords much necessary and useful information, yet, in many of the histories, both of ancient and modern times, the crimes and the vices of historic heroes are frequently so represented, that the feeling mind is shocked on reading them. History often presents a disgusting, terrible list of crimes and calamities. Murders, assassinations, battles and revolutions, are the memorable events of history. The historian makes the love of glory atone for military barbarity; treachery and fraud are frequently dignified



with the names of prudence and policy. Yet, desirous to appear moral, he makes out an inconsistent and ambiguous system of morality. If you are not careful, when reading such histories, to maintain correct ideas of right and wrong, (I mean such as Christianity inculcates,) and to guard yourselves from being deceived by the gloss which the historian puts on heroism, and the unchristian conduct attendant on war; you may be led into great and fatal error. Therefore, when you read those shocking accounts of military barbarity, and of the dreadful consequences of war, cherish the just abhorrence and sorrow which you feel, as arising from that spirit of love and tenderness which the gospel inculcates, and which characterizes the Christian.

And let me again, for a moment, invite the attention of young men to the subject of war. Although war, for purposes which, though doubtless wise, are to us inscrutable, was permitted to the Jews, yet we are under the gospel. That this dispensation is widely different from that of the law, Christ has taught us by his precepts and doctrine, and particularly pointed out, in his memorable sermon on the mount. He has, moreover, confirmed it by his example of love, and self-denial, and by doing good on all occasions, to every description of people, even to his greatest enemies who sought his life, and who finally crucified him. How he manifested his kindness, and disposition to forgive injuries, by healing the wounded ear of one, and praying for the forgiveness of them all: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" I wish you to examine the nature and design of Christianity, as set forth in the New Testament; and judge for yourselves, whether the love, meekness, and forbearance, which the Saviour practised and strongly inculcated, and which his apostles so forcibly recommended as the main pillar of Christianity, is or is not in direct opposition to the ambitious, revengeful, cruel spirit that generates and supports war. If so, do not suffer yourselves to be

led into error, by public opinion or common practice. For remember, to be a Christian is to be of the disposition of Christ ; to forgive injuries, to love and pray for enemies, to do good to those that hate us, and to resist not evil. "He hath set us an example that we should follow his steps," says the apostle Peter.

Now, leaving the subject of war, accept of a few more hints on the employment of the early years of life. While you are young, form your reputation ; increase, by your prudent conduct, your respectability ; put your affairs in proper order ; let your expenses be governed by moderation and economy. Retrench superfluous ones, that you may be enabled to bear those which propriety, friendship, and charity, demand. Make a fund of your frugality, that you may draw thereon for the service of the needy. In a word, squander no time in idleness, but employ your leisure to some good purpose. Waste nothing that may be useful to others, because we are accountable to the bountiful Giver, for the right use of both time and property. There can be no excuse (even where wealth abounds) that will justify waste and extravagance ; neither can any justifiable plea be offered for hoarding up riches, while there are so many deserving poor, who are in want of the necessaries of life.

Industry and frugality are by no means necessarily connected with an avaricious disposition. Economy is not inconsistent with generosity. It steers the middle course between extravagance and covetousness. It is observable, that the most industrious, are frequently the most liberal. I wish you to be liberal, but not prodigal ; diligent, but not avaricious ; frugal, but not sordid.

By industry and economy, we are enabled to be charitable, and sometimes liberal. And where charity keeps pace with gain, we may hope for a blessing on diligence. But to toil for wealth, in order to keep it sordidly laid up, is a sin against Providence.

Liberality differs from Charity in this ; that she has sometimes other objects ; she not only relieves the poor, but also casts her eye on those who do not absolutely want. She finds out virtue in low degree, in order to exalt it. She eases the burden of those who labour hard to live ; many kind and generous turns are found at her hand by those who do not quite want. The decayed, and the widow, and the fatherless, partake of her kindness. She takes care of one child, and finds homes for others, to lighten the loads of overcharged parents. True liberality is bounteous, but not lavish ; she confers true nobility upon man, and doubles the blessings of prosperity.

Never listen to the cravings of vanity. Young people are apt to wish to appear like others. But this desire extends a great way, and is seldom satisfied. Moderate your wishes with respect to dress. Excess in apparel is a costly folly. The more simple clothes are, the better. Let them be neither unshapely nor fantastical. Let them be made for use and decency, and not for pride. Nature requires not studied ornaments. A plain manner is in general the most ornamental. A modest dress has been considered a shield to virtue. With simplicity of attire, we commonly see a becoming neatness ; and a uniform neatness, is certainly preferable to a splendid display of finery at one time, and a mean or negligent appearance at another. The imputation of the want of neatness and delicacy, is a great stigma on the female character. If young people contract a slovenly manner, they will seldom acquire a habit of neatness, when advanced in years. On the contrary, if, when young, people are habitually neat and clean, they will rarely, if ever, be seen otherwise.

The world talks much of fortune, riches, and greatness ; but wisdom says, " Lower your desires to things simple." Lay aside unnecessary expenses, and learn to be satisfied with a plain, simple, temperate way of living : the real comforts



of life are far from being lessened thereby. Remember that the necessities of real life require but little ; those of opinion and imagination, much.

In expectation of great happiness and enjoyment, mankind aspire after situations in life above those they are in ; but alas ! when their wishes are attained, how are the possessors disappointed ! New wants and desires arise ; new objects are required to gratify them ; dissatisfaction continues ; and the void which was to have been filled, remains as great as ever. Seek not, therefore, to be rich or great, but to be happy : and if you would be happy, bring your minds to your condition, and desire not superfluities. Contentment and resignation will find comfort, even in a lowly situation. Be humble, and you will learn contentment ; and cheerfully accommodate yourselves to that station of life, in which you may be placed.

And, as the friendships you form, may materially affect your happiness, let your intimates be few, though your acquaintance may necessarily be large. And be not hasty in the choice of confidants. Let prudence and discretion direct you in the selection. In true friendship there is a mutual regard, accompanied with a desire to improve and benefit each other, without any motives of self-interest. A proper sense of virtue and honour, are necessary qualifications in an intimate companion. Where these prevail, and are attended with a free, sincere, kind, and obliging disposition, the conversation of friends will be pleasing and instructive, and they will be likely to strengthen each other in the practice of virtue.

A still more important and solemn engagement in life, is that of marriage. Enter not unadvisedly into it. Be not hasty in making choice of a companion. Keep in mind the importance of the undertaking, and act with great caution. An attachment hastily formed, or founded merely on personal charms, is seldom lasting : and if riches be the motive,



it is very doubtful whether real happiness in enjoyment will be its consequent. Matrimonial union and felicity must have something more solid for their basis. To be previously well acquainted with the principles, temper, and habits of the person you propose to marry, is very necessary. There is but little probability, that a married state will be happy, or free from disquietude, if it is not founded on virtue. And even where there are traits of virtue, if there is not a coincidence of religious sentiment, there is little probability, that even a comfortable harmony will be maintained, especially in educating a family of children. When marriage has been entered into without previous circumspection, repentance comes too late.

As entering into the married state is serious, so the duties of it are very momentous ; and if duly attended to will teach the wedded pair to contribute as much as possible to each other's ease and contentment ; both in prosperity and adversity. The same assiduity should be used to preserve affection, as to gain it. If you would preserve love, endeavour to acquire those happy dispositions which are attractive and durable ; bearing in mind, that between man and wife, nothing but love ought to rule. Authority is for children and servants, and not even these without sweetness. Sweetness of temper, cheerfulness in conversation, and tenderness of feeling, will tend greatly to establish and preserve matrimonial happiness and cordiality. But, on the contrary, if a little self-will in one, should be met with anger in the other ; or some trifling misconduct, with upbraiding ; if there should be reproach instead of forbearance, and sullenness and indifference, instead of good humour and kindness ; if while the wife is prudent and economical at home, the husband is squandering away time and property in diversions and extravagance abroad ; or if, on the other hand, the wife runs into costly finery, and other superfluous expenses, which the industrious husband, with all his exer-

tions cannot afford to pay ; conjugal felicity must be greatly lessened, if not destroyed.

Among other duties, may you not forget the obligations of love and gratitude due to those who gave you birth. To honour our parents, is a divine law. To assist them when they need assistance, if it is in our power to do so, is a debt we owe them. It manifests great want of filial duty, not to provide for those in the infirmities of old age, who so amply provided for us in the helpless state of childhood. Indeed much of the happiness of parents, frequently depends on the conduct of their children : it is from them that they expect to derive comfort in the decline of life. How strong are the ties which unite affectionate parents to their children who repay their tenderness by kind attention, care, and assistance !

As a family is the common consequence of marriage, and as servants or hired people generally make part of the family, permit me to remind you, that servitude, being established contrary to the natural rights of man, ought to be softened as much as possible ; and that servants should be made to feel their condition as little as may be. Do not bear hard upon them ; it bespeaks littleness of spirit to behave with loftiness to those who are subject to us. Mildness of command creates love in children, and respect in servants ; and tends greatly to preserve domestic enjoyment, as well as to enforce obedience. But when commands are arbitrary and imperious, they are destructive to social harmony. Never use illiberal words ; these are what a polite and delicate person should always avoid. Have we, who show our own faults so often, a right to expect domestics without them ? It is our duty to inspect their moral conduct, as well as their labour ; and in particulars of which they are ignorant, we should instruct them. And when they find us ready to assist and advise them, to promote their welfare, and to render them easy in their situation, they will feel not only an interest in our concerns, but a respect for us, which will

make them unwilling to offend. Whatever virtues you wish to find in servants, should be always found in yourselves. A good example will be the likeliest means of preserving them in a uniform course of regular life. But a bad one may corrupt the best inclinations.

It is a common saying, that "Despatch is the life of business." And nothing tends more to despatch, than order. Lay down a method for every thing, and adhere to it invariably, as far as unexpected incidents will allow. "Do one thing at a time," is an excellent maxim. By strict attention to the object in view, and by never putting off till to-morrow, what may be done to-day, you will accomplish more, and in a better manner, than by hurry, bustle, and agitation. Bear in mind that whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well. It facilitates business much, for people to have the implements for doing it, regularly put in their proper places, that they may know where to find them. Some people often spend as much time in looking for their tools, as is required to do the work for which they want them. The proper example of the husband, in his department, and of the wife in hers, will soon teach their family regularity. Do every thing in its own time; keep every thing in its own place; and have every thing for its own use. A want of attention to these rules, and of method in arranging business, is the characteristic of those who have much to do, and get but little done; who are frequently in a bustle, who have many things begun, but who finish nothing. The man of order avoids two extremes—a multiplicity of mixed affairs, which often produces hurry and confusion—and a total want of business—and thus he steers clear of idleness, that most fruitful source of crimes and evils.

In order to reap the advantages of regularity and method, you should adopt early rising. But, to do this, it will be necessary to avoid a practice which has become too fashionable, at least in many places—that of retiring late to rest,



The night is properly allotted to sleep ; because the darkness with which we are then surrounded, is less favourable to business, and is particularly auspicious to rest. When the light of day withdraws, how naturally do the brute creation retire to their repose ! The solemn stillness of the night, invites us to do the like. But at present too many seem to reject the invitation ; and to confound, as it were, the system of Providence, by the unnatural practice of devoting much of the night both to business and pleasure, and of the day to sleep. Thus, that part of the day which is spent in sleep, will be to such a perfect blank, for to them the sun will shine almost in vain. Early rising contributes to health, invigorates the faculties, and enables us to appropriate each part of the day to its respective purposes.

Too few people are good economists of time. The young are apt to think they have so much of it before them, that they may squander it as they please, and yet have enough left : in the same manner that great estates have frequently seduced their possessors to a ruinous profusion. Fatal mistake ! always repented of, but generally too late. Those half-hours, and hours, in the course of the day, which people think too short to deserve their attention, would at the end of the year, amount to a considerable portion of time.

The principle of being accountable for time, if once fixed in the mind, will lead the conscientious person into an inquiry, whether he spends his time as he ought ; whether some of his recreations or amusements do not encroach upon hours which ought to be dedicated to better purposes ; and whether they ought not, therefore, to be at least abridged. He will not be contented to spend large portions of time harmlessly ; they must also be spent profitably. And it will not even be enough, that his present pursuits are good, if he is convinced they might be still better. Thus he will be making continual progress in his improvement of time. His love of frivolous amusements will decrease, in direct pro-

portion to the increase of his relish for those pleasures which religion enjoins and bestows. And as his views become new, so his dispositions, tastes, and pursuits, will be new also.

You will doubtless perceive that one object of the preceding remarks, has been to encourage industry, and a regular and careful attention to business ; in the pursuit of which, and indeed in all your doings, permit me to call your attention to that comprehensive passage of the apostle, " Let your moderation be known unto all men ; the Lord is at hand." As if he had said, Look to your ways ; have a care what you do : for the Lord is near you ; he sees you ; he marks your steps ; and he will judge you accordingly. Let this excellent, this serious and close sentence live in your minds, and influence all your actions ; thus the world will be properly estimated, and no extremes will prevail. And it will be salutary, frequently to examine, not only your conduct, but your motives—not only what you do, but why you do it.

Having thus endeavoured to point out some of the duties of social life, and the requisites to make you agreeable companions, I now give it as my fixed belief, that with every other accomplishment, without religion you cannot be happy, even in this life. The happiness of man depends more upon the state of his mind, than upon any other circumstance ; nay, more than upon all external things put together. Therefore, unless we possess, what real religion produces—a conscience void of offence, and a well-governed mind,—the highest prosperity and worldly enjoyments will not afford substantial happiness. Those expectations of bliss which rest on earthly possessions and pleasures, will end in disappointment.

But religion, by teaching a dependence on that supreme Providence which disposes of human affairs, prepares the mind to meet trials and disappointments ; yea, and to bear

the most severe shocks of adversity, with becoming fortitude. Thus a good man, by adopting the Psalmist's maxim—"Trust in the Lord, and do good," enjoys more real comfort in the course of a seemingly unprosperous life, than an irreligious man in the midst of affluence and luxury.

The foundation of pure religion, is the fear and love of God, demonstrated by good works—works which show forth the Lord's praise, not in word only, but in deed. This religion leads into practical piety; produces rectitude of heart, and subjection of our wills to the divine will; disposes us to do unto all men as we would they should do unto us; breathes gentleness and affability; and teaches us to cultivate love and harmony in society; and, in short, inspires us with love and good-will to the whole human family.

And, accordingly, the all-wise Creator has so inseparably connected love to God with love to men, as well as faith with good works, and piety with charity; that it is only when they are united, that they can be acceptable to him.

Languages and customs may greatly differ; but that pure devotion of the heart to its Maker, which flows from undulterated love, is one and the same in all nations.

And as religion connects a preparation for heaven with an honourable discharge of the duties of active life, it does not require a retreat from the world, but usefulness in it. Yet it so far disengages us from the spirit of the world, as to weaken its power of disturbing our tranquillity. But let it not be forgotten, that religion is not stationary: to be valuable, it must be progressive: and the purity of the soul increases in proportion as the natural will becomes subjected to the divine will.

This is the religion you must experience in order to attain real happiness: and, to arrive at the saving knowledge of it, consult the Scriptures, more than the systems of men; but attend still more to that divine principle in your own hearts, which the apostle, in speaking to the gentiles, terms



the grace of God; and which he declares has appeared to all men, teaching us to deny ungodliness and the world's lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

The same apostle asserts, that "What is to be known of God, is manifest within. And that a manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." It is this grace, manifestation of the Spirit, or, as it is also in Scripture called, light, Spirit of God, Christ within, &c., that shows men right and wrong; checks them in their way to evil; reproves them while in the act of committing it; brings on them remorse, sadness; and distress of mind, when evil is committed. And it is by submitting to the teachings of this inward monitor, that we both learn, and are enabled to fulfil, our duty to God and to one another.

And now, in closing these hints, suffer me to caution you against continuing in a line of conduct for which you feel condemned: for if you do this, and stifle the convictions you feel, your inward reproofs will probably be less frequent, and, in time, make little or no impression. Sad situation! that you may escape it by a ready submission to manifested duty, even in giving up gratifications that are dear to you, or a right eye, is the sincere wish of one who loves your present and future happiness.









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